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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: MIDDLE EAST: ANNAPOLIS PEACE CONFERENCE;
SAO PAULO

"One Year For Peace"

Center-right national circulation daily O Estado de S. Paulo editorialized (12/1): "In the USG-sponsored meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas, the search for peace resumed the Road Map, a 2003 initiative that seemed forgotten. Responding to a President Bush's request, the two leaders agreed to start negotiations, under U.S. supervision, aimed at a final agreement within one year.... The most significant [event] was the presence in the peace conference of Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister, Prince Saud al Faigal.... Riyadh had never been genuinely sympathetic with the Palestinians. Its opposition to Israel's existence was always merely religious.... The Saudis are far from ignoring that the hidden element in Annapolis was Iran. The Iraqi catastrophe warned the Americans against launching a unilateral confrontation with Tehran's Shiite regime.... No Islamic government will support the neutralization of the presumable Iranian threat while the occupation of Palestine persists.... The US is the world's only political power capable of making Israelis and Palestinians coexist in two viable, safe and legitimate states.... Perhaps Washington has not yet realized that US foreign policy's first priority is peace between Arabs and Jews, because nothing is more essential than that to fight terrorism."

White